

personal identification codes of users. Emergencies are responded to by the terminal without having to enter a personal identification code.

Having thus described a data terminal and system in accordance with the invention, its advantages can be appreciated. Variations from the described embodiments and additional service offerings can be implemented without department from the scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A system for ordering services of goods by generating digital data representative of particular orders to a local processor center over telephone lines comprising:
 - a plurality of hand-carryable user data terminals assigned to individual users with respective uniquely associated user identification codes;
 - each data terminal having:
 - (A) a data storage medium including a send memory in which ordering data and identification data for transmission to the local processing center is stored;
 - (B) a display of alpha-numeric characters;
 - (C) a keyboard having functional code keys and order defining keys which carry both alpha and numerical characters, and means for generating key signals respectively identifying individually actuated keys and individual alpha and numeric characters thereon;
 - (D) said send memory storing data representative of an identification of the data terminal;
 - (E) means for causing on said display a display of a visually readable prompt which characterizes subsequent key actuations as representative of an identification code of the user of the terminal, and means for storing said user identification code in said send memory;
 - (F) means for causing on said display a display of selected prompts, each of which characterizes subsequent order key actuations and associated key signals as representative of predetermined data of a particular order, and means for storing key signals representative of the latter key actuations in a location of the send memory designated for said particular order;
 - (G) automatic dialing means for establishing a telephone communication link between the data terminal and the local processor center;
 - (H) means for actuating said automatic dialing means and transmitting all of the data accumulated in the send memory to said local processing center over said link in a short burst; and means for receiving response data over said link from said local processing center and storing said response data in the data terminal storage medium;
 - (I) means responsive to said response data from the local processor center for causing a corresponding display thereof on said display;
 - said local processor center including:
 - (A) means for verifying data representative of terminal number and the user identification as received from respective ones of said terminals;
 - (B) means for identifying the order data being sent by a terminal;
 - (C) means for transmitting an evaluation response to a said terminal with respect to order and identification data sent by the terminal; and
 - means for terminating said telephone link a predetermined short time after said evaluation response

transmittal to limit the duration of said communication link.

2. The system as claimed in claim (2) 1 wherein said data terminal further includes:

means for identifying an order as one to be cancelled by the local processor center.

3. The system as claimed in claim 2 wherein said data terminal further includes:

means for effectively locking out the keyboard when order data has been identified as to be cancelled.

4. The system as claimed in claim 2 wherein the data terminal further includes:

means for effectively locking out the keyboard for the time when the communication link is established.

5. The system as claimed in claim 4 wherein the data terminal further includes:

means for identifying an order as a practice order.

6. The system as claimed in claim 4 wherein the verifying means further includes:

means for storing at the local processor center the data terminal identification in association with a known authorized user identification;

means for comparing the user identification received from the data terminal with the user identification initially stored in the local processor center and authorized with the data terminal identification;

means for limiting service by the local processor center to a data terminal after a predetermined number of attempts by said comparing means have failed.

7. The system as claimed in claim 1 wherein the local processor center further includes:

means for identifying an emergency order from the order data sent by the data terminal and generating a signal indicative thereof.

8. The system as claimed in claim 1 wherein the local processor center further includes:

means for identifying order data from a data terminal as signifying a request for a cable television program; and

means responsive thereto for generating signals to enable the user of the data terminal to receive said cable television program.

9. The system as claimed in claim 1 wherein the local processor center further includes:

means for identifying order data from a data terminal as signifying an address change;

means for transmitting to said data terminal data representative of a phone number associated with the address change;

and wherein the data terminal further includes means for replacing the phone number associated with the local processing center with the phone number associated with the address change.

10. A data terminal to enable a plurality of users to place requests with a central processor through telephone lines with a plurality of such data terminals located at user locations comprising:

a user located handholdable data terminal having a keyboard, a display, a memory, input/output means for establishing data communication between the data terminal and the central processor through a telephone line, and processor control means for operation of the data terminal, said memory having a data terminal identification code which bears a known association with a user identification code;